



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

COPD: What is the diagnosis?



This 80-year-old gentleman with a history of severe chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) presented with shortness of breath. Inflammatory markers were elevated with raised white cell count and C-reactive protein. However, despite appropriate treatment for acute infective exacerbation of COPD, the breathlessness failed to improve.

At first glance of the chest X-ray, one may suggest the presence of a right lower zone bulla. This would be plausible given the history of severe COPD and the finding of reduced breath sounds in that region.



Computed tomography imaging of the chest revealed the presence of bowel in the right hemithorax and a diagnosis of diaphragmatic rupture was made. The aetiology for this remains unknown.

Daniel K.C. Lee, Prashant S. Borade
Department of Respiratory Medicine,
Ipswich Hospital, Ipswich, UK
E-mail address: dkclee@doctors.org.uk
(D.K.C. Lee)